

Teamwork

NEWS

April 2005



A NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Congratulating Commissioner Neeley on receiving the distinguished service award are Ralph Barnett, assistant commissioner of Career and Technical Education for the Tennessee Department of Education, and Ellen Saunders, national president of the State Directors of Career and Technical Education.

Educators honor Commissioner Neeley

The National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education recognized Commissioner Neeley in April with a distinguished service award for his lifelong dedication to workforce development, labor, and education.

The award nomination noted the following accomplishments:

- Commissioner Neeley has served for decades to improve opportunities for all Tennesseans, including his service on the executive committee for Education Edge.
- He was instrumental in securing a \$30 million national School-to-Work Opportunities grant for Tennessee.

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Child Labor issues focus of TDLWD TV show

“The employee started toward the fryer with a 50-pound block of lard. Once he got close to the fryer, which had been preheated to 400 degrees and was half full of hot grease, the block softened enough to slip out of the victim’s hands, and the entire 50 pound block fell into the fryer, splashing the hot grease that was in the fryer on the victim.”

This excerpt from the latest “Let’s Go to Work” program is a true story. A 15-year-old received second and third degree burns over much of his body. He was working in a familiar fast food restaurant and hadn’t received proper training for the

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Little girls who were employed at a textile mill in the early part of the 20th century pose for this photo.



Spotlight: Tommy Noe

What is the nicest thing someone has ever done for you?

I have two nice things that come to mind. First, my sister named her son after me. That's about the nicest thing you can do for a person. Daniel Thomas will be graduating from Gatlinburg-Pittman on May 31.

Also, I have a dear friend who works as an on-air host at QVC. Her name is Mary Beth Roe. I emailed Mary Beth and asked her to appear on my radio show. I conducted an interview with Mary Beth and we became email pen pals. I invited her to speak at my church in 2000. She flew down to Tennessee from Pennsylvania at no cost to me or my church to speak in all three morning worship services at Manley Baptist Church in Morristown.

I have had the pleasure of spending two of my vacations at Mary Beth's home in Downingtown. She let me go to work and observe exactly what she does on a typical day. I love the technical aspect of television, so I was thrilled not only to meet the other hosts on QVC, but to observe their on-air production. Mary Beth and her family are special in my life. Heck, I even have my own room when I visit.

What would people be surprised to know about you?

Several people may know that I host and produce a syndicated Christian radio show called "The Christian Music Magazine." I have been doing that show for 13 years. I have a recording studio in the basement of my home where I produce the show.

I have had the pleasure of meeting and interviewing Michael W. Smith, Kathy Ireland, Avalon, Rebecca St. James, Natalie Grant, Mark Schultz, DC Talk, plus many

others. One of my listeners is Tim Horner, a professional wrestler. Back in 1992, Tim asked me to work a television taping for Smoky Mountain Wrestling. I was the ring announcer for Smoky Mountain Wrestling, a wrestling organization based in Morristown from 1992 to

1995. I still work pro wrestling shows for Tim around the east Tennessee area.

How long have you worked for the state of Tennessee, and what do you like best about your job?

I have been working for the state since February 22, 1988. I love my job and the people I work with. About two years ago, I started my new position working as a dislocated worker coordinator. Some view this position as depressing; I find it uplifting because I can give people hope who have just lost hope. I may be partial, but I believe that the managers of the career centers in LWIAs 1 and 2 are the best in the state. I enjoy working with each one of them.

What is the biggest issue in state government that affects your life?

For the past several years, the news media has been focused on Tennessee's budget issues. I have



Tommy Noe and radio personality Mary Beth Roe

been pleased that over the past two years that the governor and legislature have worked closely together to avoid having a shutdown of state services. I am glad that we are not hearing the state income tax debate on talk radio.

What's in the top drawer of your desk?

Dental floss, pens, paper clips, pens, business cards

Note: Tommy Noe is a dislocated worker coordinator who works out of the Five Rivers Career Center in Talbott. He also contributed the success story on page 3 of this issue of Teamwork News.

Career Center partners work together for success in Elizabethton

On September 24, 2003, Larry K. Hubbard's life was changed when the company he worked for announced their closure. Kingsport Foundry closed its doors on December 31, 2003, resulting in the layoff of 106 employees. A Trade Act petition was filed by the company and approved by the United States Department of Labor in Washington DC.

Prior to the closure the Department of Labor determined that increases of imports of articles like or directly competitive with gray iron, ductile iron castings, and machined castings produced at Kingsport Foundry contributed importantly to the total or partial separation of workers and to the decline in sales or production at that firm or subdivision.

A rapid response team met with the employees on September 29, 2003 to inform them of the benefits available through the Tennessee Career Center system.

Larry began working for Kingsport Foundry on November 23, 1988. He worked as a molder making more than \$13 an hour when he was laid off on October 31, 2003. After filing his Trade Act claim, he decided that he wanted to improve his job skills, so he discussed his options with **Billie Troutman**, an interviewer for the TDLWD, and Gail Rice, a career counselor for the Alliance for Business and Training in Elizabethton.

Mr. Hubbard found out that under the Trade Adjustment Assistance of 2002, he could be eligible to draw extra weekly benefits after his unemployment insurance exhausted. He was also eligible to apply for and attend a training program to improve his job skills to make him more marketable. The Trade Adjustment Assistance would pay for a training that could be completed within two years or less at a state approved school and was an in-demand occupation. He decided to take advantage of this opportunity.

Larry was given the Career Scope Assessment by Gail Rice. This assessment measures both aptitude and interests through valid and reliable tasks. The results are instrumental in helping an individual begin the career or educational planning process. Larry was determined to enter the welding program offered at the Tennessee Technology Center.

The assessment process helped Larry to realize that he needed to upgrade his math skills. Larry attended Adult Education classes and put in extra hours studying. He realized time was critical in order to get this accomplished. Larry continued his basic skills studies



Larry Hubbard is pictured with Billie Troutman, interviewer in the Elizabethton office.

while attending training. His wife also worked with him at home.

Gail Rice said, "Larry was a participant who never had to be called for contacts. He always kept in touch and was very appreciative for all help received. His instructor trusted him enough to assist other students."

Larry began his training in the welding program at Tennessee Technology Center in Elizabethton on April 12, 2004. He was scheduled to complete the training on March 15, 2005. Larry was motivated and showed the initiative to complete the required paperwork. He stayed after class to complete his assignments.

Larry kept in contact with Billie Troutman while enrolled in the training program to keep her apprized of his progress. Mrs. Troutman was impressed by Larry's attitude, determination and motivation. "Larry went above and beyond my expectations. He would bring in his test results to the office. He was proud of his achievements," Gail said.

Larry's instructor, Dale Hicks, was so impressed with his attitude and work ethic that he contacted several local businesses to help Larry find a job. On February 28, 2005, Larry was hired at Bush Hog, Inc., in Johnson City.

Larry Hubbard completed his training and received his welding certificate from the Tennessee Technology Center in Elizabethton on February 28, 2005, two weeks earlier than scheduled.

Award (Cont.)

· As Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, Neeley has awarded more than 50 companies close to \$1.5 million in Incumbent Worker Training grants to upgrade skills and training opportunities for their employees.

· Neeley has also been a strong advocate of developing partnerships across public and private agencies to provide more opportunities for workers and students in Tennessee.

“The career and technical education students and teachers in Tennessee could have no better friend than Jim Neeley,” said Department of Education Assistant Commissioner Ralph Barnett. “His service to insure the quality and relevancy of programs has made a difference to Tennessee’s students. Commissioner Neeley’s dedication to these projects at the local, state, and national levels continues to positively impact current and future programs in career and technical education. His strong voice and respected leadership are treasured assets to those who seek career pathways in high schools all across our state.”

Neeley has served as chairman of the Tennessee Council on Vocational Education for several years. Under his leadership, the council has been involved in secondary and postsecondary vocational education through participation in curriculum development, industry, and other public sector support of vocational education. He has been a strong advocate of increasing the graduation rate of students through career programs.

“Commissioner Neeley shines as one of the true public servants of the state of Tennessee. As a private citizen and as commissioner for the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, James Neeley has opened up doors of opportunity for young people

across the state,” said Education Commissioner Lana Seivers.

The National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium was founded in 1920 as an association of state career education agency heads committed to leadership and outstanding performance in career technical education. The association has a growing membership of more than 200 senior state staff and concerned individuals that share the directors’ commitment to quality career technical education at the secondary, post secondary and adult levels.

Words in action

Precedent vs. precedence. A *precedent* is something that is used as an example or justification for later use. It is often applied in a legal sense: “The judge’s decision set a *precedent*.” *Precedence* is something that takes priority over something else: “People arriving early will receive *precedence*.”

Complement vs. supplement. *Complement* means “to complete something or bring it to perfection”: “His tie *complements* the suit he’s wearing.” *Supplement* means “to add something to make up for a deficiency”: “She works nights to *supplement* her income.” Both words can be used as verbs and nouns.

Acute vs. chronic. An *acute* situation lasts only a short time, but it may become *chronic* if it continues. Something that is *chronic* goes on for a long time – weeks, months, or even years. Example: “Lee is a *chronic* complainer, but he suffered *acute* embarrassment when he complained about the boss without knowing she was standing right behind him.”

Calendar

May 3 – 6, 2005

Regional Civil Rights Conference, Renaissance Hotel, Nashville

May 5 – 6, 2005

Tennessee Chapter IAWP Spring Educational Conference, Montgomery Bell State Park

May 16 – 20, 2005

Elevators Safety and Reinspection Conference, Gatlinburg

May 19, 2005

April 2005 state unemployment figures released

May 26, 2005

April 2005 county unemployment figures released

May 30, 2005

Memorial Day; offices closed

May 31, 2005

Deadline for submitting Carl T. Anderson Scholarship applications

July 24 – 27, 2005

28th Tennessee Safety & Health Congress, Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center, Nashville

Under way vs. underway. It’s two words when used as an adverb.

Example: “Our plans are *under way*.” As an adjective it’s one word, and it’s used to describe “motion.” *Example:* “*Underway* refueling of the ship took place in the Panama Canal.”

Source: Communication Briefings

Child Labor (Cont.)

frying equipment. Unfortunately this type of thing happens quite frequently. In the last six months, more than 800 cases were reported to the Child Labor division.

"Some are very minor or major. Some involve burns or lacerations due to holding a box cutter or knife improperly. A lot of young people have back injuries, sprains, and strains from wet floors. The other thing is burns from hot grease, and then we have children who operate a meat slicer, which is actually a prohibited occupation, and they end up cutting off the end of their fingers."
— Mary Ellen Grace

Communications Director Milissa Reiersen and Special Projects Coordinator Jeff Hentschel went behind the scenes of the Labor Standards office and opened the case files of one of the most severe burn injuries the division has investigated and the death of a 17-year-old who was killed while illegally driving a forklift during his job as a warehouse worker in Sweetwater.

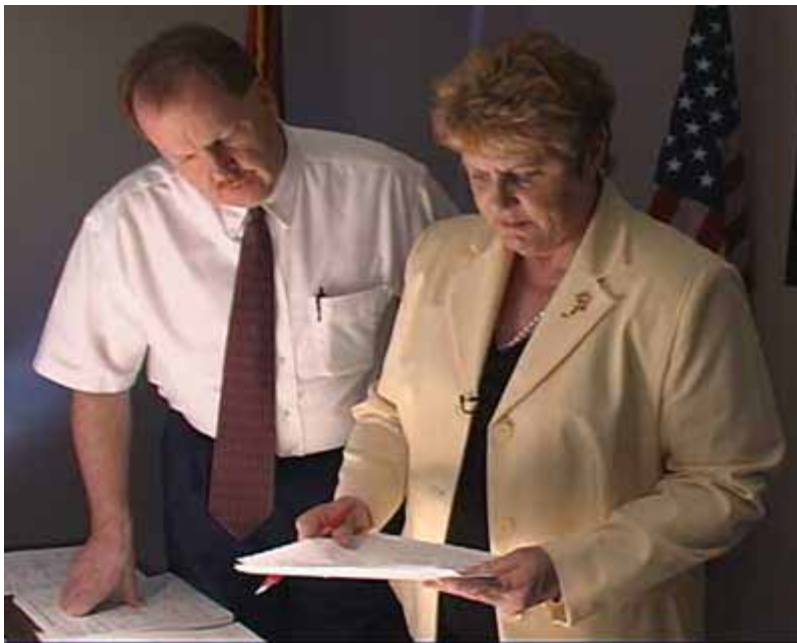
The program features the history of child labor in the United

States with pictures provided by **The History Place**. The photographs poignantly express the terrible conditions in which America's children labored during the industrial revolution. The majority of the public desired reform, whereas the business community refused to acknowledge that child labor was a serious issue. The program touches on the formation of the **National Child Labor Committee** and the passing of the **Fair Labor Standards Act** in 1938.

After a look at the history, the show provides some facts and figures about the present condition of child labor. According to the **National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health**, 200,000 adolescents are injured in the workplace every year, and 70 are killed on the job. Here in Tennessee, according to **Tennessee**



Child Labor inspector Tom Reesor and Jim Kirk of TOSHA are featured in the TV program.



Tom Hamlett and Mary Ellen Grace go over Child Labor case files.

Occupational Safety and Health, three teens were killed on the job in the last three years.

Fifty-four percent of teen occupational injuries occur in the retail industry followed by the service industry with 20 percent,

agriculture with seven percent, and manufacturing with four percent.

Labor Standards Director Mary Ellen Grace and Chief Inspector Thomas Hamlett were instrumental in providing information for the program. Reiersen likes to call their segment "**CSI-Labor Standards**" after the popular TV series. "We can't get as creative as the TV show, but we certainly have the equivalent of interesting and tragic case files that our Child Labor division investigates," said Reiersen. "It is amazing what this division accomplishes with the small number of investigators across the state. This group really works hard at what they do, and most importantly they care about the children they are protecting," Reiersen continued.

"We're not out to make big fines," said Chief Inspector Thomas Hamlett. "Our goal is not money; our goal is safety – safety for the children. Giving them a healthy environment to

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Child Labor (Cont.)

work in, to grow in; sometimes that message may get confused with the open market telling people that we're coming after you – but that's not our goal. Our goal is to create a workplace where people can do their jobs without fear of retribution."

Jim Kirk of TOSHA and **Tom Reesor**, retired child labor inspector, participated in the taping of the show. They both investigated the untimely death of a 17-year-old in east Tennessee. "This segment is a great example of two of our divisions pulling together as a team to get to the bottom of an investigation," said Special Projects Coordinator Jeff Hentschel. "This investigation resulted in the company being fined more than \$16,000 in penalties from state and federal officials combined."

Both investigators believe the 2003 fatality of 17-year-old Brandon French could have been prevented. "From what we understand about Brandon he was a young person in school who wanted to learn," said Inspector Tom Reesor. "He was a person who wanted to further himself not as much from school, but in learning from a working environment. He asked for the job. He was given the job, and he was portrayed as a person who wanted to learn, and he did not get that opportunity. He was snuffed out at an early age."

Venus Riley, child labor inspector in Wilson County, takes the "Let's Go to Work" viewer on an actual inspection where a minor was burned by hot grease. After a five-and-a-half-hour inspection, Riley found the injury was the result of an accident, but there were several other violations of child labor laws, and penalties are pending against the employer.

Child Labor Inspector **Jimmy Pinson** is also featured in a segment shot at a Middle Tennessee Subway restaurant. The segment focuses on the positive aspects of hiring teen workers and the laws that must be followed.

Boilers & Elevators, Labor Standards, Mines, Labor Research and Statistics Administrator Arthur Franklin says he hopes employers, teens, and parents learn from this program and that it will help prevent any future injuries or deaths in our state. He says they will use the 30-minute program and elements of the program in their child labor seminars

and possibly in Tennessee schools in the future. "This is the type of tool that is useful in really bringing the risks teens face in the workplace to life. It will help teens and employers see what can

happen in just an instant if rules and laws are not properly followed," said Franklin.

Reierson and Hentschel taped some segments at **Rick's Café** in the Andrew Johnson Tower building in Nashville. Special thanks to Ricky

and the employees. The program will air in May and June across the state on public television and public access channels. For pictures, movie clips, a transcript, and a schedule in your area go to www.tennessee.gov/labor-wfd

According to the **Workers' Compensation** division the top six injuries to Tennessee teens in the workplace in 2004 were the following:

1. Lacerations
2. Contusions
3. Burns
4. Strains
5. Inflammations
6. Fractures

Teamwork News



Department of Labor & Workforce Development;
February 2001; authorization no. 337287.

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Rogersville Career Center staff are pictured with Commissioner Neeley at the grand opening and open house at the facility on April 6, 2005.